

REMARKS

Claim Status

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 are now presented as methods of use of oral compositions comprising copolymers of phosphate-containing monomers or polymers with other specified monomers or polymers. Specifically claimed are methods of

(a) increasing hydrophilic character of a subject's teeth and oral mucosal surfaces as measured by a decrease in water contact angles or an increase in anionic surface charge and surface charge density and

(b) decreasing pellicle film thickness.

Method Claims 7 to 9 have previously been withdrawn as non-elected claims. The present amendment to Claim 1 incorporates the matter of Claim 7, and the claim is thus cancelled. Withdrawn Claims 8 and 9 are also cancelled. No abandonment of subject matter is intended and Applicants' right to pursue in a divisional application subject matter cancelled as a result of these amendments is expressly reserved.

No new matter is involved with the amendments to the claims. Consequently entry of these changes is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

Claims Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The rejection of Claims 1-2 and 5-6 under 35 USC §102(b), as being anticipated by Gaffar (US 4,138,477) is respectfully traversed.

The invention as now defined in the amended claims is directed to a method of modifying surface characteristics of teeth and other oral surfaces, specifically increasing hydrophilic character of oral surfaces and decreasing pellicle film thickness. Such modification of oral surfaces results in improved cleaning of oral surfaces and importantly, improved cleaning impression and aesthetics recognized by the user as smooth teeth, clean-feeling teeth, clean mouth feeling and longer lasting clean feeling. These mouth feel aesthetic benefits are significant in reinforcing to the user that using the oral composition such as by toothbrushing is working not only during use but importantly after use for extended periods of time. The present method provides the benefit of post brushing maintenance of smooth teeth/clean mouth condition, which is not adequately provided by brushing with conventional dentifrice compositions. As demonstrated in consumer testing, prior art dentifrice compositions provide relatively poor post brushing maintenance of smooth teeth/clean mouth condition, with perception below neutral by early afternoon following brushing in the morning. This is disappointing to consumers who expect cleaning effects to last longer following use. The long

lasting clean mouth impression results from modification of teeth and other oral surfaces to be hydrophilic. The hydrophilic surface, importantly, is maintained on the tooth surface for an extended period after using the product, e.g., tooth brushing. *In vivo* studies show a direct correlation between consumer desirable clean teeth and smooth teeth perception and lower water contact angle surfaces or more hydrophilic surfaces.

It is respectfully submitted that there is no disclosure or any suggestion whatsoever in Gaffar of the present claimed method to increase hydrophilic character of oral surfaces and even less that such modification of the surface would provide consumer desirable clean teeth and smooth teeth perception and that such desirable mouth feel characteristics would last for extended periods of time. Gaffar has no recognition whatsoever of the desirability of providing increased hydrophilic character to oral surfaces in order to provide consumer preferred mouth feel characteristics. Absent recognition of such desirable benefit, the present claimed method to provide such benefit could not have been disclosed by or obvious from Gaffar. Instead, Gaffar discloses and claims compositions and methods which require specifically a zinc-polymer combination to prevent and control mouth odor.

In summary, the present claimed methods are novel and inventive in view of the applied citation and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest effort to place their application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as now claimed from the applied reference. In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of this application, entry of the amendments presented, withdrawal of the claims rejection under 35 USC §102(b) and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned representative if she believes an interview might be useful to advance prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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